

SUNDAY- SEPTEMBER 17, 2023 -9:00 AM



EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MT. HOREB

*A family in faith, reaching out to share in God's love
with all people.*

MINISTERS
PASTOR
INTERN

ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH
JOHN TWITON
ZACH SMIRRIS

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Sunday, September 17, 2023 | 16th Sunday after Pentecost | 9:00 AM

(+ = stand if able; L = Leader / **C** = Congregation)

PRELUDE Diane Dangerfield

WELCOMING WORD *In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.*

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN: # 855 - Crown Him with Many Crowns

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P - Blessed be God, the one who forms us, Jesus who bears the cross, the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

C - Amen.

P - Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

Steadfast and faithful God,

C - you have revealed the ways of justice, yet we fail to follow you.

We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering.

We are afraid to risk what we have for the sake of others.

For the harm we have caused, known and unknown, forgive us.

For the unjust demands we place on others and your creation,

forgive us. For the ways we turn away from you and our neighbor,

forgive us. Lead us back to you and set us on the right path;

in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

P - God's justice stretches beyond all understanding. God's compassion is beyond compare. In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.

In Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C - Amen

GREETING

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also, with you.

+ KYRIE pg. 138

+ HYMN OF PRAISE pg. 140 "This is the feast..."

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: O Lord God,

C: merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

PRAISE TEAM SONGS: *Mighty, Mighty Savior*
 Still the Cross

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also, those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

+ACCLAMATION (pg. 142)

(sing) Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

L: The Gospel according to Matthew, Chapter 18,

C: Glory to you, O Lord

GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times." ²³"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

+L: The Gospel of the Lord

+C: Praise to you, O Christ

CHOIR ANTHEM "I Love to Tell the Story"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

MESSAGE Intern Zach Smirris

+CONGREGATIONAL HYMN # 605 - Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive

+ NICENE CREED pg. 104

THE PRAYERS pg. 143

(As the leader concludes each petition with the words:

"Lord in your mercy..." The people respond: Hear our prayer.")

OFFERING (please pass the pew pads at this time)

SONG BY PRAISE TEAM: *Forgiveness*

OFFERTORY - #182 *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

MEAL

+ Offering Prayer: God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

+The Great Thanksgiving pg. 144

+Words of Institution

+The Lord's Prayer pg. 145 (right hand column)

Communion Hymn: # 335 - *Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross*

Prayer after Communion: Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SENDING

COMMUNITY WORD

+BLESSING

L: May the blessing of God our creator, the love of Jesus Christ our redeemer, and the presence of the Holy Spirit the comforter, surround you and sustain you until we gather again.

C: Amen.

+HYMN # 836 - *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*

+DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

WE WELCOME ALL TO ELC!

Everyone. Without exception. Regardless of race, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, faith traditions, physical or mental abilities, financial resources, family status, or personal struggles. We are committed to being an anti-racist community. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we will work to extend God's grace, love, justice, and dignity. You belong here. Your story and your life are valuable. In Christ's love, we welcome you.

DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

SHARE: What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

READ: Read the following daily readings to deepen your understanding:

Monday, Psalm 133, The Blessing of Unity

Tuesday, Romans 14:13-15:2, Don't Make Another Stumble

Wednesday, Genesis 50:22-26, Joseph's Last Days

Thursday, Matthew 9:9-13, The Call of Matthew

Friday, 2 Corinthians 13:5-10, Examine Yourself

Saturday, Zephaniah 2:13-15, The Destruction of Assyria

TALK: Consider some of these ideas:

***"Lord, if another member of the church sins against me,
how often should I forgive?" -- Matthew 18:21***

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

- Have you seen that God has brought good out of a difficult situation? (Genesis 50:20)
- Do you find it comfortable to welcome others who differ from you without judgement and quarreling? (Romans 14:1-4)
- When you think of settings when you found it easy and hard to forgive, what are the factors? (Matt 18:21-22)

PRAY: O Lord God merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESS: The God of glory, Jesus Christ, name above all names, and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever. Amen.